

that Ritter von Tschusi should have ventured to re-name the British Dipper.

I should like to point out that Dr. Sharpe, in the 'Catalogue of Birds,' vol. vi. p. 309 (1881), had already stated "that to the experienced eye the English specimens form an easily recognisable race"; and that at Tring we have long ago appreciated the differences. If Dr. Sharpe were re-writing the above-cited volume, I feel sure that he also would now allow the British Dipper's right to a new name; for, after all, Ritter von Tschusi, by giving a subspecific name to this bird, is only expressing in a different and more concise way what Dr. Sharpe wrote twenty-one years ago.

Yours &c.,

Zoological Museum, Tring, Herts.
29th April, 1902.

WALTER ROTHSCHILD.

SIRS,—You conclude one of your notices in your last number (above, p. 351) with the words "What was the Cahow?" I thought this question had been answered half a century ago! I have never heard a doubt about it expressed by any ornithologist who knew anything of the Bermudas. I lived myself in the islands from 1846 to 1849. In 1847 I wrote to the late Sir W. Jardine, stating that from what the fishermen had told me of the Cahow (which was well known to them) I believed that it would prove to be one of the Petrels (Jard. Contr. to Ornith. 1849, p. 79). I afterwards, in company with the late Sir J. Campbell Orde, obtained specimens of the bird and some of its eggs near the Cooper Islands. The late Col. H. M. Drummond-Hay and Lt -Col. Wedderburn also procured specimens of it, as did Mr. Hurdis. No doubt there are even now a few pairs still lingering about the home of their ancestors. I observe that Mr. Verrill has misquoted Mr. Hurdis, who says that the Shearwater, *Puffinus obscurus* (with which *P. auduboni* is rightly identified by Mr. Salvin), is still known by the fishermen as "the Cahow." See also Jones, 'Naturalist in Bermuda,' p. 94. In 1874 Capt. Reid, R.E., found a

few pairs of this bird with two nests. Unless ruthless visitors have exterminated them very recently, they still visit the Bermudas in the breeding-season. I may add that the eggs, which were about the size of a small hen's egg, are very smooth and shiny. Happily the Dusky Shearwater has many other breeding-haunts, so that there is no fear of its universal extinction at present. But I have said enough in refutation of Mr. Verrill's dogmatic statement that the Cahow was certainly *not* a Shearwater.

Yours &c.,

College, Durham.
8th April, 1902.

H. B. TRISTRAM.

[We regret to have been misled by Mr. Verrill. The Cahow question has already been discussed in the 'Dictionary of Birds' (p. 831), which we had quite overlooked.—EDD.]

Fertilization of Plants by Birds.—We all know that insects play a most important part in the fertilization of plants, but it is a more recent discovery that birds also in some cases perform the same function. In a paper on New Zealand Flowers read at the meeting of the Linnean Society of London on February 20th last, by Mr. G. M. Thomson, some observations were made on the birds which visit them and appear to help in cross-fertilization, *e.g.*, the Korimako (*Anthornis melanura*), the Grey Warbler (*Gerygone flavirostris*), the Pied Fantail (*Rhipidura flabellifera*), and the Yellow-breasted Tit (*Petræca macrocephala*). Of these the Korimako was ascertained to assist in the fertilization of the native fuchsias, on quitting which it was observed that the bird had its head stained with the bright blue pollen of the flowers.

New Name for the British Wren.—We have already recorded the bestowal of a new name on the British Dipper (see above, p. 353), and have now a fresh surprise for our ornithological friends. The British Wren, we are told, ought to be called

“*Olbiorchilus troglodytes troglodytes* (Linn.)”! Mr. Oberholser (‘Auk,’ 1902, p. 175) maintains that the section of the Wrens to which the British species belongs is not entitled to the name “*Anorthura*” assigned to it in the ‘Catalogue of Birds,’ because “*Anorthura*” is the strict equivalent of *Troglodytes*, and *Troglodytes* is properly applicable to the American group of Wrens typified by *Troglodytes aëdon*. He therefore proposes for *Motacilla troglodytes* of Linnæus the new generic name *Olbiorchilus*, and, in accordance with the trinomialism now in fashion, the British Wren becomes *Olbiorchilus troglodytes troglodytes*!

To this we reply that ordinary common sense is sufficient to teach us that the type of the genus *Troglodytes* of Vieillot was intended to be *Motacilla troglodytes* Linn., although Vieillot, when he first mentioned the genus in his ‘Oiseaux de l’Amérique Septentrionale’ (ii. p. 52), naturally enough, only referred to the American species. But on turning to Vieillot’s List of Genera in his ‘Analyse,’ it will be found that the “*Troglodyte*” of Buffon (= *Motacilla troglodytes* Linn.) is placed first in his list of species of *Troglodytes* and *Troglodytes aëdon* second. It cannot, surely, be denied that Vieillot has here pointed out what was his obvious intention in the plainest manner. We therefore venture to reject Mr. Oberholser’s view that *T. aëdon* is the typical species of the genus *Troglodytes*, and we shall continue to call our British Wren by its time-honoured name. Even if the contrary opinion be held to be correct according to the rules of nomenclature adopted by the A.O.U., we do not see the necessity of separating *Troglodytes aëdon* and its allied forms from *T. parvulus* generically.

Balæniceps at Khartum.—Mr. W. A. Milner has kindly sent us a copy of a photograph of *Balæniceps rex*, lately taken from a specimen living in the Sirdar’s Palace Garden at Khartum. This bird, after being “winged,” was captured alive on the White Nile by Col. Sparkes and presented to Lady Wingate. It will be recollected that two living